

# Philippines & World **R E P O R T**

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## ► Fil-Am vets press for health benefits

Washington — About 11,000 Filipino World War II veterans living in the United States are pressing Congress to approve legislation that will provide health care for them, hopefully before they all die.

The health care issue has been moving in fits and starts over the past two years. At the last session of the 107th Congress, the House of Representatives passed the measure but the Senate was unable to act on it before adjournment.

To get the issue back on track, at the start of the 108th Congress, Hawaii Democratic Sen. Daniel Inouye reintroduced a similar bill in the Senate (S68) and a corresponding measure (HR 664) was introduced in the House by Rep. Bob Filner, a California Democrat.

"We owe not only a debt of

gratitude to these brave veterans, but we owe them recognition as veterans of the United States military. And we owe them the benefits they were promised. Now in their 70s and 80s, they are in desperate need of health care, and approximately five veterans are dying each day," said Filner, a strong supporter of the veterans.

"We must quickly pass this bill to begin the process of restoring benefits that are deserved by the Filipino World War II veterans," Filner added.

The bill when enacted into law will provide an annual budget expenditure of \$11.6 million for Filipino war veterans living in the United States who were previously excluded from VA medical care.